

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-08

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 INR-05 CIAE-00
PM-03 DODE-00 SP-02 L-01 INRE-00 PRS-01 USIE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO USMISSION USBERLIN IMMEDIATE

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9284

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 10474

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PGOV WB US UK FR UR

SUBJECT: RUDOLF HESS: DISPOSAL OF REMAINS

REFS: (A) USBER 1659; (B) BONN 2037; (C) BONN 1587;
(D) BONN 1212; (E) BONN 832;
(F) 76 STATE 301274; (G) 76 BONN 19026

BEGIN SUMMARY. THE EMBASSY HAS NO OBJECTION TO AN
EARLY APPROACH TO THE SOVIETS IN BERLIN AIMED AT
REACHING AN UNDERSTANDING ON HOW THE 1970 AGREEMENT
ON DISPOSITION OF HESS' REMAINS IS TO BE IMPLEMENTED.
WE CAUTION, HOWEVER, THAT OUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE
PREVIOUSLY AGREED SCENARIO IS THAT LONDON EXPECTS TO
BE CONSULTED BEFORE THIS STEP IS TAKEN. THAT SCENARIO
INCLUDES THE PROVISIO THAT A FOLLOW-UP ATTEMPT TO REACH
AGREEMENT ON TURNING OVER THE REMAINS TO THE FAMILY
SHOULD BE CONSIDERED, IN THE EVENT THE SOVIETS REACT
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NEGATIVELY (AS THEY HAVE NOW DONE) IN BERLIN. END
SUMMARY.

1. THE EMBASSY HAS SOME CONCERN ABOUT PROCEEDING TO
ATTEMPT TO PIN DOWN THE SOVIETS ON DETAILS FOR CARRYING
OUT THE 1970 AGREEMENT ON CREMATION, AS OUTLINED IN
PARAS 4 AND 5 OF REFTEL (A).

2. IT IS NOT FOR US TO COMMENT ON HOW MUCH LATITUDE THE UK MISSION FEELS IT HAS UNDER ITS INSTRUCTIONS, AND WE WILL OF COURSE RESPECT USBER'S REQUEST THAT THE INFORMATION IN REF (A) NOT BE SHARED WITH BRITISH AND FRENCH EMBASSIES HERE. NEVERTHELESS, OUR RECOLLECTION OF EARLIER TRIPARTITE DISCUSSIONS IS THAT LONDON CLEARLY EXPECTS TO BE CONSULTED ON NEXT STEPS.

3. WHILE THE AGREED SCENARIO WAS REPORTED ONLY IN SUMMARY FORM IN REFTEL (G), THAT SUMMARY WAS INTENDED TO CONVEY THE UNDERSTANDING THAT THERE WOULD BE FURTHER CONSIDERATION IN CAPITALS BEFORE MOVING TO FALLBACK POSITIONS.

4. AS REPORTED IN PARA 4, REF (G), THE AGREED SCENARIO WAS THAT, IF ABRASIMOV REACTED NEGATIVELY TO THE PROPOSAL FOR TURNING OVER THE REMAINS TO THE FAMILY FOR BURIAL OUTSIDE BERLIN, "A FURTHER APPROACH IN CAPITALS, PERHAPS AT THE DCM LEVEL, SHOULD BE CONSIDERED." OUR RECOLLECTION IS THAT THE UK REP REPORTED, IN CONNECTION WITH LONDON'S APPROVAL OF THE SCENARIO, THAT APPROVAL BASICALLY EXTENDED ONLY TO THE FIRST STEP -- THE DEMARCHE WHICH AMBASSADOR WRIGHT MADE TO ABRASIMOV ON JANUARY 19 -- AND THAT WE WOULD NEED TO DECIDE WHERE TO GO FROM THERE AFTER RECEIVING CONFIDENTIAL

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ABRASIMOV'S REPLY.

5. WE ARE GLAD THAT THE BRITISH POLAD HAS NOW

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 10474

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RAISED THE MATTER WITH KHOTULEV IN AN EFFORT TO PIN
DOWN A REPLY AT THE BERLIN LEVEL TO THE WRIGHT
DEMARCHÉ. THE QUESTION FOR CONSIDERATION NOW IS
WHETHER WE SHOULD TAKE THE ABRASIMOV/KHOTULEV "NO"
AS FINAL AND PROCEED TO TIE DOWN DETAILS ON THE BASIS
OF THE 1970 AGREEMENT, OR WHETHER WE SHOULD MAKE A
FRESH DEMARCHÉ TO THE SOVIETS IN CAPITALS OR IN MOSCOW.
OUR HUNCH IS THAT LONDON WOULD PREFER THE LATTER COURSE.

6. THE DIFFICULTY, AS USBER AND THE DEPARTMENT ARE
AWARE, IS THAT IT WOULD BE THE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE
BRITISH COMMANDANT TO IMPLEMENT THE CREMATION PLAN,
PRESUMABLY USING THE GERMAN CREMATORIUM IN THE BRITISH
SECTOR. AS WE UNDERSTAND IT, THIS COULD INVOLVE AN
OCCUPATION ORDER SETTING ASIDE THE GERMAN LAW WHICH
PROHIBITS CREMATION AGAINST THE WISHES OF THE DECEASED
OR HIS NEXT OF KIN. GIVEN BRITISH POLITICAL
SENSITIVITIES CONCERNING HESS, WE CONTINUE TO HAVE
DOUBTS THAT THE BRITISH WOULD BE PREPARED TO ISSUE
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SUCH AN ORDER WHEN THE TIME CAME.

7. THE CLOCK KEEPS TICKING AWAY, AND THERE ARE
OBVIOUS MERITS TO HAVING FIRM PLANS FOR DISPOSAL OF
THE REMAINS. ON THAT BASIS, THE EMBASSY WILL NOT
INTERPOSE ANY OBJECTIONS TO GOING AHEAD WITH THE
PROPOSAL BY THE BERLIN MISSIONS FOR AN EARLY APPROACH
TO THE SOVIETS ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 1970 AGREEMENT,
UNLESS THE DEPARTMENT WISHES TO RECONSIDER THE MATTER.
WE WOULD URGE, HOWEVER, THAT USBER DISCUSS THE
MATTER PRIVATELY WITH THE UK MISSION AND POINT OUT
OUR CONCERNS THAT THIS GOES BEYOND WHAT LONDON HAS
THUS FAR AGREED TO. IN ORDER TO AVOID MISUNDERSTANDING
AND CROSSED SIGNALS, IT WOULD SEEM PREFERABLE FOR THE
BRITISH TO REPORT THEIR JUNE 16 CONVERSATION WITH
KHOTULEV TO BONN AND LONDON AND SEEK FRESH INSTRUCTIONS

BEFORE MOVING AHEAD.

8. IF THE ISSUE IS RETURNED TO EMBASSIES FOR
CONSIDERATION, WE WOULD ENDEAVOR TO PROMOTE AGREEMENT
AS RAPIDLY AS POSSIBLE ON RECOMMENDATIONS TO CAPITALS.
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